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ENG 5000-001: Introduction to Methods and Issues in English Studies

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INTRODUCTION TO METHODS AND ISSUES IN ENGLISH STUDIES
Graduate English 5000 Section 1 (31653)
Spring 2013 / Tuesday 7:00 - 9:30pm and by arrangement / Coleman 3159

Professor Suzie Park
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 Office Hours: MW 12:30-3:00 and by appointment

From the point of view of things themselves

This course is designed for the advanced study of current methods and issues in literary studies in English. Such fields of inquiry include literary form, history, psychology, gender, class, race, and disability. Based broadly in the study of narrative, the course will introduce students to the basic tools for discourse analysis at the graduate level. However, since the course introduces new ways of looking at textual objects through major theoretical approaches, it will also introduce new ways of looking at objects in all of their objecthood. That is, some of the most recent theoretical approaches to texts encourage a fresh look at texts and objects—and even human beings—as themselves equally observant, equally meaningful. The two approaches with which we will spend significant time are object-oriented ontology and animal studies. Ranging from a study of literature and culture in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to the novels of J. M. Coetzee and Kazuo Ishiguro (*Never Let Me Go*), our readings will trace the connections between imagining and narrating the inner lives of people and things, and treating people and things accordingly. If it is no coincidence that narratives of all sorts have one thing in common—that they must center on a person, or a thing that shows the features of a person—the questions still remains: what does it mean to have a story to tell?



Primary Texts

Ishiguro, Kazuo. *Never Let Me Go*. New York: Vintage, 2006. 978-1-4000-7877-6
 Eliot, George. *Middlemarch*. New York: Norton, 2000. 978-0-393-97452-9
 Coetzee, J. M. *The Lives of Animals*.
 Waiting for the Barbarians.

Book-Length Critical Studies

François, Anne-Lise. *Open Secrets: The Literature of Uncounted Experience*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007.

Woloch, Alex. *The One vs. the Many: Characters and the Space of the Protagonist in the Novel*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003.

Liu, Alan. *The Laws of Cool*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2004.

Handbooks

Culler, Jonathan. *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Mikics, David. *A New Handbook of Literary Terms*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010.

Rivkin, Julia, and Michael Ryan, eds. *Literary Theory: An Anthology*. 2nd ed. Blackwell. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004.



COURSE POLICIES

Reading

As this is a graduate-level literature course, there will be reading aplenty. This includes primary texts (fiction) and secondary materials (articles, theoretical texts). I expect every member of our class to keep up with the reading and be prepared for discussion.

Requirements

Participation in discussion (20%)

Short papers and presentation
(20%)

Essay One (20%)

Essay Two (40%)

LATE POLICY: Essays—and all other assignments—are due at the beginning of class.

- 1) Late essays will be marked a full grade lower for every day late. Essays turned in a week past the deadline will be given a “zero.”
- 2) Short at-home writing assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class. Late ones will not be accepted.
- 3) In-class writing assignments and quizzes must be turned in by the end of class, and cannot be “made up” at a later date.

EMAILING POLICY: I want to get to know you and your work this semester. Thus I ask that you call me or stop by my office during office hours (or other scheduled times) so that we can talk. **DO NOT EMAIL ME TO ASK FOR AN “UPDATE” ON MISSED ASSIGNMENTS, OR TO EXPLAIN AN ABSENCE.**

ESSAY FORMAT: Your paper should be paper-clipped. It must include page numbers. Format: 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins.

PLAGIARISM:

Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade on the assignment, if not for the course. I will follow the departmental policy on plagiarism:

“Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—‘The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s own original work’ (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments, of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.”

Always submit your papers using correct MLA (Modern Language Association) format.

Professor Park / English 5000-001: *Schedule of Classes*, subject to revision

WEEK ONE

Tuesday 1/8 Introductions; **The Rise of the Novel and the Need to Know**

- The Rise of the Novel: some notes—handout
 - Ian Watt, “Realism and the Novel Form” (from *The Rise of the Novel*)—handout
 - J. Hillis Miller, “Narrative” (from *Critical Terms for Literary Study*)—handout
 - Jeremy Bentham, from *Panopticon; or, The Inspection-House* (1787)—handout
-

WEEK TWO

(Date and time to be scheduled for all subsequent weeks)

Things, things, things: a place to begin our most preliminary inquiries into the study of English

- CRITICAL ESSAY: Bill Brown, “Thing Theory,” *Critical Inquiry* (2001)—handout
 - REVIEW ESSAY: John Plotz, “Can the Sofa Speak? A Look at Thing Theory,” *Criticism* (2012)—handout
 - NOVEL: Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go* (Part I, chapters 1-6, pages 3-76)
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WEEK THREE

Labor Theory

- THEORY: Karl Marx, “The German Ideology” (Rivkin 653-58)
 - CRITICAL BOOK: Alex Woloch, *The One vs. the Many*: Introduction (pages 12-42)
 - ESSAY: E. M. Forster, “Flat and Round Characters”—handout
 - NOVEL: Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go* (Part I, chapters 7-9, pages 77-111)
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WEEK FOUR

Cultural Studies Theory selections in Rivkin and Ryan’s *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, pages 1232-67:

- Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” (1235-41)
 - Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, “The Culture Industry as Mass Deception” (1242-46)
 - Michel de Certeau, “The Practice of Everyday Life” (1247-57)
 - Dick Hebdige, “Subculture: The Meaning of Style” (1258-67)
 - NOVEL: Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go* (Part II, chapters 10-17, pages 115-203)
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WEEK FIVE

- NOVEL: Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go* (Part III, chapters 18-23, pages 207-88)
- theoretical readings to be announced